



Introducing Ian Connon – Emergency Manager

He's been an alternate recovery manager, a teacher, head of our parks and reserves team and a rural firefighter volunteer – and now new emergency manager Ian Connon is ready to tackle his most challenging role yet.

Ian, 47, starts his new job on Monday and replaces outgoing emergency manager Phil Parker, who retired this month.

Having already been with the council for eight years, Ian knows a lot of people in the community and is keen to connect with them about Civil Defence.

"I look at this as an educational role – helping the community improve its awareness of Civil Defence and the environment we live in," he says. "I've always been interested in Civil Defence and am thrilled I will be able to expand on that."

As a teenager, Ian spent time volunteering for Search and Rescue and has spent the last six years volunteering for the Taupō Volunteer Rural Fire Authority.

Last year he took on the role of council's alternate recovery manager, which involved learning about Civil Defence planning and strategy. He has played a part in previous emergencies including helping with logistics during the snow event on Napier-Taupō Road in 2009 and cleaning up after storm and flooding events in the district.

He first wanted to join Civil Defence as a volunteer six years ago, but as the team was then at full capacity with volunteers, he went with Rural Fire. Today, however, Civil Defence is in need of volunteers and Ian will lead the charge to recruit them over the next few months.

Ian was a teacher in Wellington before working as a parks and



reserves manager in the same region. Since he moved to Taupō to take up the parks and reserves role in our district, he hasn't looked back.

"What I love about Taupō is that we get to live in a holiday destination all year round – there is so much to do," he says. "I hope I can further contribute to this amazing community through my work in Civil Defence. I can't wait."

Cenotaph upgrade

The upgrade of the Taupō cenotaph is in the final stretch, with a red and black coating going down on the paving this week.

The brightly coloured finish has been done in the shape of a poppy and symbol of the ANZAC Day centenary.

Final touches will now be added before it is tidied up for the community to access on ANZAC Day for services.

The cenotaph upgrade was done to commemorate the centenary of World War I this year with the help of a \$144,000 grant from the government's Lottery World War One Commemorations and Environment and Heritage Committee.

New granite panels and plaques have been erected to beautify the cenotaph.

The refurbishment is a joint project coordinated by the council, with help from the Returned Services Association, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and the Taupō branch of the Society of Genealogists. The grant will also help fund educational activities to be hosted by Taupō Library and Taupō Museum. Work will be completed in time for ANZAC Day.



Positive feedback from residents' survey

Do you think our district is looking pretty spectacular at the moment? You're not alone!

We recently conducted a residents' survey on our district to find out how the community feels we are doing. It showed 62 per cent of residents thought the district was more attractive than three years ago. This was the biggest jump in our ratings, with a 12 per cent increase in the number of people who believed the district was more attractive than the last survey. We are really pleased we are improving the look of our district and hope to continue to make heads turn.

The survey is done every three years by independent company National Research Bureau.

In all of the measures surveyed, our council was above the national average and that of its peer group councils.

We received a lot of positive feedback about the services we provide, with 68 per cent of those surveyed believing we do a good job. That's above the national average and that of our peer group councils.

Similarly, 68 per cent believe we are in touch with our community as a council, and 88 per cent are happy with how we provide information on our services and facilities.

The survey focussed on a broad range of services and facilities like roads, footpaths, cycleways, water supply, wastewater, stormwater, rubbish and recycling collection, litter control and landfills, libraries, parks and reserves and venues.

A total of 450 residents and out-of-district ratepayers were surveyed. We do this survey every three years to make sure we are on track and serving our community well.

Focus on business growth

Throughout this triennium, I have enjoyed many aspects of being on council. There are certainly times when you have to be determined about your thoughts, but equally you must always be open to new ideas and strategies as you are only one voice among a group of councillors.



I made it clear when I put my name forward that I was not going to focus all my energy on issues that some residents may want addressed, such as debt reduction programmes and rate debates, that many other councils face as part of today's society. I'm not in any way saying these issues are not important and we shouldn't try to reduce debt further or look at ways of minimising rate rises and control spending where possible. I'm just suggesting that if there are certain things we can't immediately change then we should focus on things we can do something about.

I am very excited about the programmes currently being run by Enterprise Great Lake Taupō to attract new businesses to town, as rates and services will become more affordable for us all as more people choose to live here. Some exciting new businesses have started up which means more people are now calling our district home. I'm sure many of you saw how busy the town was over Easter and the school holidays. I didn't mind that there were less parks available and that it took me longer to get to town – it meant there were people here visiting the local attractions, eating in our cafes and restaurants, and shopping in our stores!

I am also very determined in my capacity as a councillor to do everything possible to assist a new airline to get up and running from Taupō to Wellington as soon as possible after Air New Zealand exits at the end of the month. I firmly believe that Taupō needs this lifeline to the capital to thrive and grow, to retain its status as the number one destination to visit in New Zealand, and to retain all its current events as well as attract new ones.

We were elected as councillors to make some tough decisions, and for me this is one I truly believe in so I hope we can get this one off the ground...literally!

Rosie

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What's on

- 25 April ANZAC Day services, district-wide
- 28 Apr Council meeting, 1pm, Council Chamber
- 18 Apr Active Post Taupō-Rotorua Flyer, Taupo Events Centre
- 1-3 May Taupō Home and Garden Show, 10am-5pm, Great Lake Centre
- 13 May 2degrees Comedy Convoy, 8pm-10pm, Great Lake Centre

For more information on Taupō District events visit www.GreatLakeTaupo.com

Email your elected members at councillors@taupo.govt.nz

For more information call 07 376 0899 or go to www.taupo.govt.nz

